

# 1998 Wisconsin Trapping Regulations

This pamphlet gives you a summary of Wisconsin's most important trapping laws and how they affect you; it is not a complete set of laws.



## ★ New in 1998 ★

- Bobcat registration is required, however, it is not restricted to the county of kill or adjoining county.
- The muskrat season has been extended until the last day in February for the North, Central Mississippi and South Zones (Winnebago Zone still ends on March 15).
- The 75 trap restriction has been eliminated.
- The southern borders of Beaver Management Zones A and B have been changed to follow State Highway 64 (these zones are now the same as the Otter North zone).
- **See new regulations inside for Conibear type traps and Otter Tag Issuance Program.**

Support ETHICAL RESPONSIBLE TRAPPING  
Report Violations  
**Call 1-800-TIP-WDNR**  
(1-800-847-9367)

**Toll Free Statewide 24-Hour Confidential**  
(This is NOT an information number)

## Trapping Hours

- Legal trapping hours are from 6:00 a.m. to 7 p.m. CST (7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. DST).

## License and Permit Information

1. **Residency:** You must be a Wisconsin resident to purchase a Wisconsin trapping license. **Cost:** \$18.00 (See also "Trapper Education" inside.)
2. **Duplicates:** You can acquire a duplicate trapping license if you provide an affidavit proving the loss of the original license.
3. **Use:** You may **not**:
  - transfer your license, permit or tag, or allow its use by anyone else.
  - carry any trapping license, permit or tag issued to anyone else.
  - obtain a trapping license, permit or tag for someone else.
4. **Purchasing Fur:** You must possess a Fur Dealers License or DNR permit to purchase fur.
5. **Animals Causing Damage:** During the closed season, a DNR permit may be required to remove nuisance animals. Contact your nearest wildlife manager or nearest DNR office for details.
6. **Landowner Provisions:** The owner or occupant of any land, and family members, **do not need a license to**:
  - trap beaver, foxes, raccoon, woodchucks, rabbits and squirrels on the land year-round. All other restrictions apply. (See "Beaver Damage Control" on inside panel for more information.)
  - live trap with box traps beaver, rabbits, raccoons and squirrels on the land at any time in cities, villages or other areas where the discharge of firearms is unlawful. Live trapped animals must be either killed or released after capture.

## Definitions

**Dry Set** - means a trap set or staked to be completely on dry land with no possibility of the trap or trapped animal to reach water.

**Wet Set** - means a trap which is set or staked in a manner to permit the trap or trapped animal to reach water at any point.

**Capable of Drowning** - means a set designed to allow the trapped animal to travel to water of sufficient depth to cause drowning. Slide wires or poles, locking devices, slip chains, weighted traps and traps staked in deep water are commonly used in drowning sets.

**Sight Exposed Bait** - means any bait which can be seen from above the bait.

## Trap Checking Requirements

**Dry Set** - You must check dry sets at least once each day and remove any captured animals from the set.

**Wet set** - You must check wet sets at least once each day and remove any captured animals from the set.

**Drowning Set** - Sets capable of drowning must be checked within a 4 day period following the last tending of the set and any captured animals removed from the set. You must monitor water levels to ensure effective drowning sets.

**Ice Set** - There are no mandated trap checking periods for sets made under the ice.

## Trap Size and Placement Restrictions

**Consider all set placement to avoid contact with humans and domestic animals. We strongly encourage the use of cubbys and elevated sets when using conibear type traps on dry land. Future use of conibear type traps depends on it!**

**You may not:**

- set, place or operate any *waterset* smaller than 5 and 1/2 inch jaw spread for steel-jawed traps and 6 and 3/4 inch x 6 and 3/4 inch for killer traps (conibear type) during the beaver and otter seasons, *except* when the muskrat/mink season is open in the zone you are trapping.
- set, place or operate any steel-jawed trap with a spread width of more than 8 inches.
- operate trap sets which permit the trapped animal to reach water, except when the muskrat, beaver or otter trapping season is open in the zone you are trapping.
- set any trap or snare closer than 15 feet from any beaver dam. (Landowners see "Beaver Damage Control" on inside panel).
- set, place or operate any killer trap (conibear type) that is larger than 7 x 7 inches *unless one-half of the trap is located underwater at all times.*
- set, place, or operate any snare regardless of the noose size, *unless one-half of the snare noose is located underwater at all times.*
- set, place or operate any steel-jawed trap with teeth unless such traps are located completely underwater at all times.
- set, place or operate any killer trap (conibear type) greater than 6 x 6 inches or any snare regardless of the size of the noose in the following locations:
  1. Within 3 feet of any federal, state or county road right-of-way culvert unless completely submerged in water.
  2. Within 3 feet of any woven or welded wire fence.
  3. Within 100 yards of any building devoted to human occupancy without the owners consent.
- use sight exposed bait consisting of feathers, animal flesh, fur, hide or entrails within 25 feet of any trap.
- set, place or operate any snare unless the noose cable and noose attachments conform to the following specifications:
  1. Cable length may not exceed 5 feet.
  2. It must be non-stainless steel metal cable or wire.
  3. The cable or wire diameter may not exceed 1/8 inch.
  4. It must have a mechanical lock and anchor swivel.

## Methods

All live furbearing animals taken during the open season for such species shall be killed immediately and made part of the daily bag. It is unlawful to keep such animals alive after their capture, unless you have first obtained the DNR permit or license that permits their possession.

Elevated traps are legal for furbearers as long as the sight exposed bait law is followed.

### You may **not**:

- place a trap, snare, bait or scent for furbearing animals during the closed season.
- set any trap or snare unless a metal tag is attached, stamped or engraved legibly with the name and address of the owner. Heavy-duty stamped tags are desirable.
- take or attempt to take beaver, fisher, mink, muskrat or otter by any means other than trapping or snaring.
- possess any trap for the purpose of catching furbearing animals other than a steel-jawed trap, live trap or snare. Such traps shall be constructed so that not more than one animal can be taken or captured.
- *molest or take someone else's traps, snares or trapped animals.*

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**Trap Theft:** Stealing or molesting traps or snares is a criminal act and is punishable by fine (\$300-\$1,000), imprisonment (up to 90 days) or both, and a mandatory 5-year revocation of license.

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- disturb or molest any mink den, muskrat house, muskrat feeding house or beaver dam.
- place on the ice, any artificial house or den for the purpose of catching any furbearing animals.

## Possession Restrictions

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**Definitions:** (1) *Raw fur* means the undressed skins or pelts of any furbearing animal, including ones that have been stretched and dried. (2) *Green pelts* are the skins or pelts of any furbearing animal that have not been stretched and/or dried.

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### You may **not**:

- possess the green pelts of any furbearing animal, except beaver, beginning on the 6th day after the season closes.
- possess a bobcat, fisher or otter pelt at any time, unless a valid carcass tag is attached and locked to the pelt.
- possess any mink, muskrat, fisher, or otter pelt that has been shot or speared.
- possess any raw fisher, mink, muskrat or otter pelt at any time without a current trapping or fur dealer's license or special permit issued by the DNR.
- ship fur unless the outside of the container is marked with the number and species being shipped, and the name, address and trapping license number of the shipper.

## Special Regulations Bobcat, Fisher and Otter

### Permits and Tags

#### You may **not**:

- trap or attempt to trap any bobcat, fisher or otter unless you possess special DNR permits and tags:
  1. Permit and tag applications (Form 9400-478) are available from DNR offices listed on the back panel of this pamphlet or the Information Center in Madison starting in early August. Mail applications, with the \$3.00 application fee per species, to the DNR License Section, Box 7924, Madison, WI 53707. Applications must be postmarked no later than Sept. 10 or received in person at the DNR Information Center, 101 S. Webster Street, Madison, by that same date.
  2. You must possess your valid license, permit and tags while trapping.
- possess or have under control any bobcat, fisher or otter unless you immediately attach and seal a valid pelt tag through the opening of the animal's mouth to the opening of its eye, immediately beneath the skin. The pelt tag shall remain attached to the pelt until removed by a fur dresser or taxidermist at time of preparation.

### Registration

#### You may **not**:

- transfer, give, trade, sell, or purchase any bobcat, fisher or otter pelt unless it bears a DNR registration tag attached by an authorized DNR representative.
- possess fisher, bobcat, or otter pelts *later than 5 days after the established season closes* without registering the pelt(s) with an authorized DNR representative.

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You must skin bobcat, fisher and otter and separate the pelt from the carcass before registering the pelts at designated DNR stations. In 1998-99, you must present bobcat and otter carcasses and fisher skulls when pelts are registered; the DNR retains the carcasses for research purposes. Station locations vary. Watch for newspaper notices prior to the season or contact your nearest DNR office.

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## Animals Protected at All Times

Badger, Canada lynx, cougar, elk, flying squirrel, moose, pine marten, timber wolf, white deer, wolverine and any other endangered or threatened species.

## Special Rule Clarifications

- **Trapping Navigable Waterways:** Trapping in Wisconsin, even on navigable waters, constitutes a trespass and, therefore, *all trappers must obtain permission before trapping on any private land, even if entry is by public waterways (enforced by sheriff's department).*
- **Staking of Trap Sites:** Using stakes to mark a trap site anywhere prior to the season opener has no legal basis and does not reserve the site for the person placing the stake.



## DNR Service Centers

Contact these DNR Service Centers for **tagging dates**.

Office hours are 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday

### South Central Region

Madison .....	608-275-3266
Dodgeville .....	608-935-3368
Horicon .....	920-387-7860

### Southeast Region (Milwaukee)

Pike Lake Forest .....	414-670-3400
Kettle Moraine State Forest South Unit .....	414-594-6200
Plymouth .....	920-892-8756
Sturtevant .....	414-884-2300

### Northeast Region (Green Bay)

Oshkosh .....	920-424-3050
Peshigo .....	715-582-5000
Sturgeon Bay .....	920-746-2860

### West Central Region (Eau Claire)

Baldwin .....	715-839-3700
Black River Falls .....	715-684-2914
La Crosse .....	715-284-1400
Wausau .....	608-785-9000
Wisconsin Rapids .....	715-359-4522
Wisconsin Rapids .....	715-421-7800

### Northern Region

Antigo .....	715-627-4317
Cumberland .....	715-822-3590
Park Falls .....	715-762-3204
Rhineland .....	715-365-8900
Spooner .....	715-635-2101
Woodruff .....	715-356-5211

General mailing address:  
Department of Natural Resources,  
Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707

Phone: 608-266-2621.

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Visit the DNR Website:  
<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife>

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This publication is available in braille, audio cassette, large print or computer format upon request. To order, call (608) 267-7473.



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